

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, December 3.
 —“The more it changes, the more it’s the same thing,” said PRINCE ARTHUR, looking round bustling scene on this, the opening day of Fifteenth Parliament of the QUEEN.
 True in regard of general aspect. The same high spirits, the same boisterous greeting of old friends safe after shipwreck of General Election, the same ceremonial. But looking round, one notices many gaps and changes. Front Opposition Bench pretty much as it was. WILLIAM WOODALL, whose cheery presence

familiar there through many Sessions, comes again no more. He was a man who had friends on both sides. For the rest, Front Bench stands where it did, aglow with mutual love and responsive admiration.
 Below gangway on same side, many changes, chiefly in Irish camp. WILLIAM O’BRIEN comes back, bringing his sheaves with him. On the way he has trampled down TIM HEALY’S friends. TIM himself, happily still to the front, may be counted upon to hold his own against whatever odds. Probability of some interesting incidents in that quarter of House as Session proceeds.
 Most changes on Ministerial side. Shipping interest notably stricken.

DON CURRIE has put up his helm, and steamed away to his Highland home. P.-&O. SUTHERLAND has paired with Castle-Union EVANS. A distinct loss this to character of House. P. & O. didn’t often deliver set speech. When he did, always had something to say. Even when he was silent, his presence suffused benches below gangway with priceless air of responsibility and wisdom.
 Corner seat, whence through the ages COURTNEY has been accustomed to rise and instruct mankind, to-day occupied by another.
 “I wish,” SAUNDERSON once said in Debate, “the Right Hon. Member for Bodmin were seated on the opposite side of the House. Then I might expect, when

Division bell rang, to find him voting in the same lobby with myself."

Most of all, Treasury Bench has suffered sea change. We shall not any more hear JOKIM luminously explaining Admiralty Estimates, or any other. He was one of the old school of Members, whose numbers thin as the years glide. Soon there will be none who sat in the epoch-making Parliament elected in 1868. Eloquent testimony to JOKIM's high character and honest purpose is borne by fact that, though like others he has migrated from one political camp to the other, he has never been the object of bitter personal attack.

Two of the most portly presences which in the last Parliament lent weight to Treasury Bench have been withdrawn. MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY has had enough of the Home Office, and HARRY CHAPLIN, yearning for personal freedom, has taken a back seat. Sark says T. W. RUSSELL has his eye upon him. T. W. (according to this authority) believes he can break up the Government within the space of three years. With HARRY CHAPLIN in alliance it might be done in two.

With characteristic modesty, HORACE PLUNKETT usually sat at remote end of Treasury Bench under shadow of Speaker's chair. He will therefore be missed from observation less prominently than others. But the manner of his cutting off will ever remain a slur upon the party of Law and Order in Ireland. A stock reproach they have levelled at their countrymen in Nationalist camp is that they were always ready to sacrifice national interests or party advantage to personal considerations. HORACE PLUNKETT is, by common consent, a man who has done more for the material advancement of Ireland than any other of his generation. Personally popular, esteemed in increased proportion as intimacy grew closer, he seemed of all men the most certain of retaining his seat. But he was *lié* with GERALD BALFOUR, and favoured his chivalrous scheme of killing Home Rule with kindness. Above all, with many highly connected but needy Unionists available, he inducted into comfortable salaried post a man simply on the ground that in the public interest he was the most suitable. So a Unionist seat was delivered over to the enemy, and a Member who personally had no enemy was stabbed in the back.

JESSE COLLINGS, bereft of the companionship of POWELL WILLIAMS, sits forlornly on Treasury Bench thinking of these things, and trying to remember how long after the Heavenly Twins were separated one lingered on the scene.

Business done.—New Parliament foregathers.

"I'LL TALK TO YOU LIKE A DUTCH UNCLE."
—Oom PAUL at Marseilles.

THE SCIENTIFIC SERMON.

["The Monsterphone was used last Sunday in the church of St. Mary-at-Hill to represent a sermon delivered by the Archbishop of CANTERBURY."—*Daily Paper.*]

HAIL, Science, who with eager mind
Ever on the alert to find

Fresh fields for your researches,
Now deign our many faults to mend,
To hasten to our aid, and lend
Your presence to our churches.

Should organist his aid refuse,
The barrel-organ we can use
That any engine can turn;
And lesson from the mart or street
You show us, on a snow-white sheet
Cast by the magic lantern.

No longer need a curate crude
His thrice-repeated platitude
Sunday by Sunday dish up,
Since henceforth we from Monsterphones
May hear the wisdom—nay the tones
Of even an Archbishop.

So since for preaching, by your aid,
The cream of sermons is purveyed,
Of first-rate orthodoxy,
But one thing's left for you to do—
Invent some scheme by which I, too,
Can go to church by proxy.

MORT AUX TYRANS!

KRUGER VENGÉ! EXPÉDITION CONTRE LES ANGLAIS. SOUSCRIPTION COLOSSALE.

LES misérables mercenaires de l'abominable Syndicat anglo-juif, qui n'ont pas encore vaincu les héros Boers, seront bientôt chassés du Transvaal. Tremblez, ignoble CHAMBERLAIN, infâme LOUBET, méprisable WALDECK! Enfin, JOË, dictateur de la perfide Albion, vous serez écrasé! Votre Syndicat de Trahison, votre rapacité, votre infamie, n'auront d'autre résultat que d'agrandir le pouvoir, déjà si vaste, de la presse nationaliste française, et de moi-même, HENRI TROFFORT.

Nous allons organiser une expédition de volontaires venant de tous les pays de l'Europe. Nous—c'est à dire la presse nationaliste française—nous ne quitterons pas la France. Nous recevrons chez nous les souscriptions de ceux qui aiment, comme nous les aimons, les vaillants Boers, et qui désirent témoigner leur sympathie en nous envoyant de l'argent pour les volontaires. C'est à nous de parler; c'est à ces derniers de se battre.

Cette expédition, organisée par nous et par nos confrères de la presse nationaliste universelle, ne doit pas échouer faute d'argent. Ce serait trop honteux. Pour payer les volontaires et les organisateurs, pour l'armement de navires, pour la nourriture, pour le transport, pour les munitions de guerre, il nous faut au moins un milliard. Quelques optimistes parmi nos amis ne demandent que 990

millions de francs. Ce n'est pas la peine de discuter l'utilité de ces dix millions, dont nous n'aurons pas besoin peut-être. C'est si peu de chose. En tous cas, nous pourrions offrir des épées d'honneur à tous les généraux, et un beau cadeau de noces, en diamants—et cela coutera au moins un million—à la jeune reine de Hollande, adorée pour le moment par tous les anciens communards. Car c'est elle qui s'est montrée si bienveillante envers le vénérable KRUGER, le républicain huguenot adoré pour le moment par tous les royalistes et par tous les impérialistes de la France. PAUL et WILHELMINE, Paul et Virginie, quelle touchante ressemblance! Et quel parfum de poésie romanesque au milieu du tohu-bohu de la vie, comme l'odeur d'un bouquet de violettes dans une imprimerie!

Il nous faut donc un milliard. Voici la première liste de cette souscription colossale.

	Fr. c.
M. HENRI TROFFORT	10 0
Anonyme	15 0
M. ADOLPHE DURAND	3 0
Un lecteur assidu	0 50
Mme. DUPONT	2 50
M. van den VEELGLASSCHIEDAM de Hertogenbosch	2 0
Un ouvrier	0 30
Un jeune Français, âgé de quatre ans, ennemi acharné des tyrans britanniques	0 20
M. JULES DUBOIS	1 50
Un médecin-major en retraite	3 0
Un garçon de café (une <i>lira</i> , pièce italienne, valeur actuelle)	0 5
Cinquante étudiants, amis dévoués de l'héroïque président et de ses compatriotes invincibles, luttant contre les barbares d'Outre-Manche. Vive KRUGER! Conspuez CHAMBERLAIN!	1 0

Total 39 5

HENRI TROFFORT.

A BIG POLL-TAX.

DEAR MR. PUNCH, — I see that an American millionaire states he will give one million dollars to get the American flag planted at the North Pole. This sum—which I take to be the *parva figura poli*, mentioned ironically by OVID—would seem large enough to spur the flagging zeal of even the least patriotic of explorers. It sounds bombastic, but to the talker on this subject a degree of latitude may suitably be allowed—and in the upshot an allowance of several may be necessary. Polar exploration has always partaken of the nature of a nervous disease, and this phase of it is doubtless the arctic-dollareux. Yours Nansensically,

MARCO POLO.

A DIET DIARY.

Monday.—Most annoying; find that bread is so adulterated with poison that it is impossible to take it. Even toast is hurtful, and I can't eat biscuit. Cut them off.

Tuesday.—Article in the paper showing that sugar and butter are both hurtful to health. Well, sweets and flesh formers do not add to the elegance of one's figure! So cut them off.

Wednesday.—Never suspected meat before. Still, paper insists upon the harm of it. Better give it up. At any rate, it will lessen the burden of the butcher's book. Cut it off.

Thursday.—According to the papers, must not take milk or wine. Butter very bad for the system. So is wine. Well, cut them off.

Friday.—The paper again on diet. Seems fish is very injurious. Must not eat it if one is to keep well. Cut it off.

Saturday.—Papers again on the food war-path. Vegetarianism a great mistake, Nothing to eat, nothing to drink. Apparently all owing to the climate. May eat and drink safely in other climes. So cut myself off!

STEYN'S RESOLVE.

["To sell the Transvaal to the highest bidder."]

ADMIRABLE idea this. Only a few insignificant objections that we can see to the scheme, some of which we detail below:—

1. That the Transvaal is not Mr. STEYN'S to sell.

2. How would the purchaser propose to take possession? Would he take the Transvaal away with him, or how?

3. Would the British troops, now occupying the Transvaal, be also included in the purchase, i.e. going with the territory, as one job lot?

And if all these petty objections were satisfactorily arranged for, would the faithful burghers be confiding enough to stand by, and sing little hymns, whilst Mr. STEYN put the purchase price in his pockets?

We merely throw out these ideas as possible impediments; but, after all, doubtless the sale could be effected—if only the purchaser could be found.

STUDIES IN SMALL ZOOLOGY.

THE BLACK BEETLE.

THIS Swarthy Insect is the Terror of the kitchen range. *Rien n'est sacré pour un escarbot!* as our volatile neighbours have it. He has no particular fancy in provender. Intoxicating liquor is as readily consumed by this truculent toper as is the lacteal product of the cow. Sugar and spice to him are nice, and he will stay his Gargantuan appetite as readily with fried bacon as with gooseberry tart. When in-



AT A LAWN MEET.

Son of the House. "Oh, Mr. HUNTSMAN, OUR KEEPER HAS GOT SUCH A LOVELY FOX FOR YOU!"

Huntsman. "GLAD TO HEAR IT, SIR. WHERE SHALL WE FIND HIM?"

Son of the House. "WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS NOW; BUT I SAW HIM IN A BOX LAST NIGHT!"

ebriated, he is a painful object, and throws himself on his back with the readiness of a Hooligan resisting the persuasion of a police constable. When gorged with purloined viands, he selects the most comfortable corner of the fireplace and obliges his distant cousins, the crickets, to entertain him with minstrelsy.

He laughs at the means employed for extermination, knowing well that if a cat be foolish enough to devour him she herself will pay the penalty, while the traps invented by humanity to compass his death are looked upon as wholesome methods for thinning superfluous cousins. There is a fallacious idea that the

Hedgehog is partial to a diet of Black-beetles, but so little heed does the Pest pay to the Destroyer that he has been seen to ease his itching by rubbing himself on the spines of prickly porker.

The savage intractability of his temperament is shown by the fact that *nobody* has ever tamed a Black Beetle. Mice have comforted the solitary prisoner, spiders by their zeal have inspired heroes to great deeds, ants have stimulated the industry of mankind, and lizards and snakes have been enthralled by harmony, but the Black Beetle is absolutely void of utility. If pounded in a mortar he would not, despite his nigrous hue, make a decent substitute for boot-polish.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.

A GREAT THOUGHT FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

IN MONTHLY PARTS.

XII.—THE GEORGE MEREDITH SECTION.

(Continued from November.)

19TH, 20TH.—“No Veuve like the Old Veuve,” he cried across the opal iridescence, bubbles winkingly discursive at brim; and was resiliently instant to retrieve the solecism, like the connoisseur he was of BACCHUS and the feminine. Was not this indeed the fair widow's first excursus into Epicuria since her husband's lapse to the underworld?

“Onions is off,” the waiter interposed, with sharp recall by Phateon - descent from ether to earth. She blushed a tempered rubicund. Should he retrospect for its meaning to the Veuve-solecism? Or did “onions” stand with her for an artificial excitative of the lachrymal, proper in tolerated widowhood tending to consolable? Opposing arguments paced out their duello distance divisive of his dear mind; “New widows are the best” confronted by “The time of tears and convention is over.” After all, was there so great difference? Let them embrace brotherly over boxed pistols to satisfaction of honour.

21ST TO 24TH.—

[Lines on the recent publication of *Bismarck's Love Letters*; after *The Nuptials of Attila*.]

This is he of the iron throat,
Bold at beer of Lager blend,
Stout to swallow, and never wince,
Twenty quarts or so on end;

My BISMARCK, O my BISMARCK.

He whose voice, a thunder peal,
Rang across the squadrons' thud,
Chirrup of stirrup, clank of steel,
Sabre on sabre, shock of lance,
Uhlan's lance on cuirass-plate;
Voice of the trumpet-blast of Fate
Smiting the flanks of Seine in flood,
Flood of the blood of the flower of France.

My BISMARCK, O my BISMARCK.

Strange to think he lived at home
In a human sort of way;
Never, with his lips afoam,
Felled the harmless patient cat;
Never actually sat
In a fit of brutal play
On his heir-apparent's head;
Never even pulled his ear;

My BISMARCK, O my BISMARCK.

Never brained the servant who
Made for him his daily bed;
Dealt in no domestic crime
Such as bigamy; merely wed
One wife only at a time!
Can it be we judged amiss
Of the Great in peace and war
As regards his private sphere?
Erred, in fact, in looking for
Stronger hero's stuff than this,

My BISMARCK, O my BISMARCK?

25TH, 26TH.—At midway of Eiffel Tower he alights, suspicious of elevators ascendant descendant; gazes a rapt disillusionment on Paris at her unpavilioning dispensive of borrowed vanities into pantechneia restive for the centrifugal.

Lately transilient of ocean, and now swathed in air something short of rarefied, he too craves surcease of vanities, content to secure a bullioned sanctuary on the firm of earth beyond torrid zone of artifice-acclaim, with leisure through veiling

smoke, not of the cannon's belching, to inform himself of uncaged guerillas rampant in remnancy on uppermost of kopjes; distracted to the minimum by apprehension of insults offered to well-fed derelict, cordoned, like the arch-enemy's wife she is, with luxury, and hebdomodally eloquent of incredible barbarisms.

27TH.—It is the same France, implacably woman to the eyes of her, dowered for farce-play with the eternal mutable. Yesterday conspuitive to the nauseous at mention of DREYFUS *redivivus*; swooping in guise of massed Amazons of the line, javelins low at thigh-rest, on solitary appealing for only Truth and Justice with what of voice remained from Devil-Isle torture. To-day uproarious in fantastic serenade of Liberty under balcony of discredited tyrant heavy with spoil of the unenfranchised, mildly ruminant on Ignorance butchered, he away, to make his Dutelman's holiday.

28TH, 29TH.—Bronze-ardent with meridian suns,

Scent of Italia's flowers about his boots,
Behold the Ineluctable leap to land!
Still salt by briny converse with the fleet,
A tar in being. Dover's silent guns
A little irk him, hardened to salutes.
Behold him stand,
Brummagem-factured, monoceled, aloof,
Unspoiled of admiration, envy-proof,
Intolerably self-complete:
Janus of war to ope or shut at will;
An orb of circumvolvent satellites,
Portentous past belief; of good and ill
Bodeful to measureless of mortal ken;
Now off the swung machine a bounding god,
And now the ditchward guide of blinded men.

So sees him Europe planted, she, at gaze;
Sees him that Britain Greater by his nod,
Addressed to undreamed acrobatic flights,
Bent to negotiate
The sundering bar of centuries both in blaze;
A salamander in asbestos-tights
Armoured against the igneous of Fate.

30TH.—A strange irruption of brute atavism, this gallery clamour of the Hooligan loud to extinguish the favourable of stalled Intelligence; percipient Judgment merged in the boo of Premeditation. Not without reason was it recorded in the Pilgrim's Scrip: “*The last thing to be civilised by man is the gods.*” O. S.

“AUTHOR! AUTHOR!”

THE old plan was to reserve publication of the Author's name until after the first performance of the piece. Up to that moment it was supposed to be a secret; at all events, if it was “a secret of PUNCHINELLO,” it was one that Signor PUNCHINELLO did not divulge. If a failure, no name was given. Failure, and oblivion. If a success, the manager stepped forward and “named” the author, who could then, if he so pleased, “bow his acknowledgments from his private box.”

Better return to the ancient plan, omit all official mention of the author until the play is over; then announce it. Let it appear on the next issue of programmes. No more booing; no more bowing.

NOT QUITE THE CORRECT WAY OF PUTTING IT.

“HULLO, old chap, been putting your room to rights, eh?”

“Yes—and now I'm just off to see old THINGUMMY—you know.” (Puts on overcoat—then suddenly, as he regards his hands, which are none the cleaner for his having been engaged in dusting book-shelves and arranging library.) “Bother! Well, I can't stop now—I must wash my hands on the road.”

“Hum! that operation won't make them much cleaner, eh?”



OOM PAUL'S DAY DREAM.

HOW HE SAW HIMSELF "ON THE SPREE!"

"L'HOMME PROPOSE," BUT IT WASN'T TO BE.

["It is uncertain when Mr. Kruger will go to Berlin, or even whether he will go there at all."—Berlin Correspondent of "Times," December 1.]

John Bull.

A BAYARD FROM BENGAL.

Being some account of the Magnificent and Spanking career of
Chunder Bindabun Bhosh, Esq., B.A. Cambridge.

BY BABOO HURRY BUNGSHO JABBERJEE, B.A.
Calcutta University.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SENSATIONAL DERBY STRUGGLE.

*Is it for sordid pelf that horses race?
Or can it be the glory that they go for?
Neither; they know the steed that shows best pace
Will get his flogging all the sooner over!*

Reflection at a Racecourse.—H. B. J.

THE DUCHESS, seeing that her plot was foiled by the unexpected arrival of Mr. BHOSH, made the frantic endeavour to hedge herself behind another bet of a million sterling to nothing that *Milky Way* was to come off conqueror—but in vain, since none of the welshers would concede such very long odds.

So, wrapping her features in the veil of feminine duplicity, she advanced swimmingly to meet Mr. BHOSH. "How lucky that you have arrived on the neck of time!" she said. "And you have ridden all the way from town? Tell me now, would not you and your dear horse like some refreshment after so tedious a journey?"

"Madam," said Mr. BHOSH, bowing to his saddle-bow, while his optics remained fixed upon the Duchess with a withering glare. "We are not taking any—from your hands!"

This crushing sarcasm totally abashed the Duchess, who perceived that he had penetrated her schemes and crept away in discomfiture.

After this incident *Milky Way* was subjected to the ordeal of trying her weight, which she passed with honours. For—very fortunately as it turned out—the twenty-four hours' starvation which she had endured as left luggage had reduced her to the prescribed number of *maunds*, which she would otherwise have infallibly exceeded, since Mr. BHOSH, being as yet a tyro in training Derby cracks, had allowed her to acquire a superfluous obesity.

Thus once more the machinations of the Duchess had only benefited the very individual they were intended to injure!

But it remained necessary to hire a practical jockey, since CADWALLADER PERKIN was still lamenting in dust and ashes at home, so Mr. BHOSH ran about from pillow to post endeavouring to borrow a rider for *Milky Way*.

Owing, probably, to the Duchess's artifices, he encountered nothing but refusals and pleas of previous engagement—until, at the end of the tether of his patience, he said: "Since my mare cannot compete in a riderless condition, I myself will assume command and steer her to victory!"

Upon which gallant speech the entire air became darkened by clouds of upthrown hats and shouts of "Bravo, BINDABUN!"

But upon this the pertinacious Duchess lodged the objection that he was not in correct toggery, and that, even if he still retained his tall hat, it would be contrary to etiquette to ride the Derby in a frock coat.

"Where are his racing colours?" she demanded.

"Here!" cried Mr. BHOSH, pulling forth the cream and sky-blue silken jacket and cap from his pockets, and, discarding his frock coat, he assumed the garb of a jockey in the twinkling of a jiffy.

"I protest," then cried the undaunted Duchess, "against such cruelty to animals as racing an overblown mare so soon after she has galloped from London!"

"Your stricture is just, O humane and distinguished lady," responded the judge, who had conceived a violent attachment to *Milky Way* and her owner, "and I will willingly postpone the

race for an hour or two until the horse has recovered her breeze."

"Quite unnecessary!" said BINDABUN. "My mare is not such a weakling as you imagine, and will be as fit as a flea after she has imbibed one or two champagne bottles."

And his prediction was literally fulfilled, for the champagne soon rendered *Milky Way* playful as a kitten. Mr. BHOSH ascended into his saddle; the other horses were drawn up in single rank; the starter brandished his flag—and the curtain rose on such a race as has, perhaps, never been equalled in the annals of the Derby.

The rival cracks were named as follows:—*Topsy Turvy*, *Poojah*, *Brandy Pawnee*, *Tiffin Bell*, *Tripod*, *Cui Bono*, *British Jurisprudence*, and *Rosy Smell*. The betting was even on the field.

Poojah was a large tall horse with a nude tail, but excessively nimble; *Tripod*, on the contrary, was a small cob of sluggish habits and needing to be constantly pricked; *Tiffin Bell* was a piebald of goodly proportions; and *Rosy Smell* was of same sex as *Milky Way*, though more vixenish in character.

Not long after the start Mr. BHOSH was chagrined to discover that he was all behindhand, and he almost despaired of overtaking any of his fore-runners. Moreover, he was already oppressed by painful soreness, due to so constantly coming in contact with the saddle during his ride from London—but "in for a penny, in for a pound of flesh," and he plodded on, and soon had the good luck to recapture some of his lost ground.

It was the old fabulous anecdote of the Hare and the Tortoise. First of all, *Topsy Turvy* was tripped up by a rabbit's hole; then *Rosy Smell* leaped the barrier and joined the spectators, while *Tripod* sprained his offside ankle. Gradually Mr. BHOSH passed *Brandy Pawnee*, *Cui Bono*, and *British Jurisprudence*, until, on arriving at Tottenham Court Corner, only *Tiffin Bell* and *Poojah* remained in the running.

Tiffin Bell became so discouraged by the near approach of *Milky Way* that he dwindled his pace to a paltry trot, so Mr. BHOSH was easily enabled to defeat him, after which by Cyclopean efforts he urged his mare until she and *Poojah* were cheek by jowl.

For some time it was the dingdong race between a hammer and tongs!

Still, as the quadrupeds ploughed their way on, *Poojah* churlishly refused to give *place aux dames*, and *Milky Way* began to drop to the rear. Seeing that she was utterly incompetent to accelerate her speed and therefore in imminent danger of being defeated, CHUNDER BINDABUN had the happy inspiration to make an appeal to the best feelings of the rival jockey, whose name was JUGGINS.

"JUGGINS!" he wheezed in an agonised whisper, "I am a poor native Indian, totally unpractised in Derby riding. Show me some magnanimous action, and allow *Milky Way* to take first prize, JUGGINS!"

But Mr. JUGGINS responded that he earnestly desired that *Poojah* should obtain said prize, and applied a rather severe whipsmack to his willing horse.

"My mare is the favourite, JUGGINS!" pleaded Mr. BHOSH. "By defeating her you will land yourself in the bad odour of the *oi polloi*. Have you considered that, JUGGINS?"

JUGGINS's only reply was to administer more whipsmacks, but CHUNDER BINDABUN persevered. "Consider my hard case, JUGGINS! If I am beaten, I lose both a *placens uxor* and the pot of money. If, on the other hand, I come in first at the head of the winning pole I promise to share my entire fortune with you!"

Upon this, the kindhearted and venial equestrian relented, warmly protesting that he would rather be a *proxime accessit* and second fiddle than deprive another human being of all his earthly felicity, and accordingly he reined in his impetuous courser with such consummate skill that *Milky Way* forged ahead by the length of a nose.

Thus they galloped past the Grand Stand, and, as Mr. BHOSH gazed upwards and descried the elegant form of the Princess



District Visitor. "WELL, MRS. HODGES, GOING TO HAVE A CUP OF TEA?"
Mrs. Hodges. "OH NO, MISS; WE'RE JUST GOIN' TO 'AVE A WASH!"

VANOLIA standing upon the topmost roof, he was so exalted with jubilation that he elevated himself in his stirrups, and, waving his cap in a chivalrous salute, cried out: "Hip-hip-hip! I am ramping in!"

"Then," I hear the reader exclaim, "it is all over, and *Milky Way* is victorious."

Please, my honble friend, do not be so premature! I have not said that the race was over. There are still some yards to the judge's bench, and it is always on the racing cards that *Poojah* may prove the winner after all.

Such inquisitive curiosity shall be duly satisfied in the next chapter, which is also the last.

(To be concluded.)

WHAT WE MAY COME TO!

(A tubular tale for the times.)

I HAD come to the conclusion—as I usually do after a good dinner—that it was the best of all possible worlds, when the door opened and MOPPLES appeared. I gazed at him with sleepy irritation. "Yes?" "Post, Sir." "Put them down." MOPPLES did so, then softly vanished. I looked at the white pile lazily. Invitations—bills—company prospectuses. Prospectuses nearly all the same—"Elec-

tric Tube." Dence take the tube! I looked at the glowing fire. The prospectuses suffered a sudden illumination. Then I leant back in my chair and weighed the *pro's* and *con's* of smoking another cigar.

* * * * *

"Here we are, at London Bridge."

I started, and looked round. My old friend SMITH was staring out of the carriage window. As the train slowed down, I looked out also, and, to my surprise, saw fields and meadows on either side, and just a few picturesque looking chalets dotted about.

"Wouldn't think they were stations, would you?" said SMITH, following my gaze. "And, my dear chap, it's such a blessing going everywhere by electric tube—not to mention the peacefulness."

"But—the houses! Where do people live?" I inquired in stupefaction.

He regarded me pityingly.

"You've been so long abroad that you don't seem to realise the changes we've made. Why, everyone lives underground—except the extreme poor. You don't appreciate all that means. No fogs—splendid light, and pure air conveyed down shafts. No noise worth mentioning—the tremor and rumble you soon get used to. No dirt—think of that, at this

time of the year. No extremes of temperature. Why, it's simply grand!"

We get out of the train. We walked over a field, and then crossed a rustic bridge spanning the Thames. I looked at the ducks and waterlilies below.

"Yes," said SMITH, "there's some pleasure going on the Thames now that all navigation, except pleasure boats, is taken through the Thames Underground Canal."

We entered a Swiss chalet.

"Now," observed SMITH, "it's ten minutes from here to South Kensington by tube; three minutes by another tube to Fulham, then fifteen seconds in a lift to my house. Grand situation, 100 feet below the surface."

"Is every town in England like this?" I gasped.

"Well, Liverpool is old-fashioned still."

I fled, murmuring "Liverpool" in accents of feverish desperation.

"Are you going out to-night, Sir?"

"Liverpool," I muttered, struggling to a sitting posture.

"Beg pardon, Sir,"

"Eh—eh! Why, yes. Call a hansom. I'll take a drive—somewhere—anywhere!"

"Thank goodness!" I murmured, as I settled myself comfortably in the cab.

DRINKING SONG.

It is proposed to devote the profits of the *bucette* in the Paris Chamber of Deputies to relieve the necessities of ex-Deputies. Happy thought! Why not extend the principle to the House of Commons? Mr. Punch pictures M.P.'s carousing in the bar to the strains of their new drinking song:—

Come, boys, let us be merry,
For providence is vain,
Fill high your glass with sherry,
Fill high with dry champagne!
Broach bottle after bottle
Till not another spot 'll
Descend your swimming throttle,
Then, hey! begin again!

If any should reprove you
And dare to reprimand,
Let this reflection move you
To scout the preaching band:
The more you drink, the more, boys,
Will you be making store, boys,
For days when youth is o'er, boys,
And crabbéd age at hand.

One used to hear of pensions
To bless the old and grey,
But no one ever mentions
These "simple schemes" to-day.
They will not help us, therefore
The matter we must care for
Alone, unaided: wherefore,
O waiter, more Tokay!

DEAN AND CHAPTER & CO.

["Anyone who wishes to sketch in the Cathedral will, besides furnishing a satisfactory reference, pay 2s. 6d. to the Fabric Fund for each day's leave. Photographers will usually be charged 6s. for each day.

"Each person desiring permission to go through the Cathedral without attendance will, besides furnishing a satisfactory reference, pay 2s. for such an order."—*Canterbury Cathedral Orders.*]

SCENE—*Canterbury Cathedral.*

APELLES. A VERGER.

Verger. 'Ere, Sir! Wot are you a-doin' of? Shut up that there sketch-book!

Apelles. What am I doing? I paint the temple, which in very truth is a stately pile; nor have I seen any nobler, not even in Athens.

Verger. But where's your horder?

Ap. What sayest thou? I do not understand.

Verger. Why, you can't come 'ere a-sketchin' without you gets a horder. Hartises we charges arf-a-crown a day.

Ap. Fellow, thou amazest me. I have not heard the like, no, not in all Hellas, nor amongst the barbarians whom I have visited. But I will go to the High Priest, and say to him, Father, I have journeyed many leagues that I might see thy temple—

Verger. 'Tain't no use, Sir. You can't get a horder not without you pays for it.



A MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENT.

Voice from above. "FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE BE MORE CAREFUL, SMITH. REMEMBER, YOU'VE GOT THE WHISKEY!"

Ap. Then this is done with the consent of the High Priest?

Verger. By his horder, Sir.

Ap. And these long-haired youths whom I see busy in various parts of the temple—

Verger. They've all paid, Sir. There ain't no gettin' out of it.

Ap. Surely, in a strange manner your priests receive their guests! Tell me, fellow, dost thou not think that when strangers come wishing to honour their temple they should fling wide its doors and rejoice seeing them?

Verger. Between ourselves, Sir, they ain't sorry to 'ave the 'arf-crowns.

Ap. Then they rejoice, not reflecting on the honour that is done their temple, but because each painter pays them so many obols?

Verger. But you ain't paid me yet, Sir. We makes a small reduction if you comes by the week, or if you're a photographer—

Ap. The gods forbid! And if I may not draw a few lines unless I pay the obols, I will put up my tablets. Prithee, depart, fellow, that I may at least meditate undisturbed by thy mercenary prattle.

Verger. If you wants to meditate, you must fust find a satisfactory reference, and then pay two bob a day.

Ap. No, by Zeus, not an obol will I pay thee, for it is neither right nor seemly that the priests should take money from the stranger, who comes to worship in the temple of the gods, but rather with open arms they should receive him, saying: Friend, we rejoice that thou art come to the fair shrine in which we delight to serve, and we will gladly share with thee the many and wonderful glories which the gods have entrusted to our care. But thee especially, an artist, do we welcome, for thou of all men hast a seeing eye for beauty. Moreover, an artist created these stately columns, and these graceful arches Religion owes to Art; surely, then, we should ill-repay the debt if, with a churlish and niggard hand we thrust thee from the Sanctuary. Enter, my friend! Go whithersoever thou listest! Study at leisure this masterpiece of thy craft, that having meditated its beauties thou mayest haply repeat its triumphs, to the honour of thy noble calling, and the glory of the blessed gods.

REPLIES FOUND IN A TRAVELLING DESPATCH-BOX.

Post-mark, Paris.—So pleased you enjoyed your visit. Sorry you were not in time for the Exhibition. Quite desolated you had to leave so soon. Distressed I can do nothing in the matter of which you speak. Our army is magnificent, but is required elsewhere. So let us cry, my dear friend, "Long live our Republics." Mine and yours—if you have one.

Post-mark, Berlin.—You are labouring under a mistake. The telegram of which you speak was sent years ago—under a misapprehension. No, not a single grenadier. Impossible.

Post-mark, Constantinople.—Deep sympathy. Yes, certainly; take the army, but you will have to find back pay. Their last instalment on account was ten years ago. Can you advance a million? Would take a fifteenth part. Might make a call. Could put you up comfortably with your bar gold to any amount.

Post-mark, London.—Of course; always ready for a popular turn. Afraid you would scarcely draw. Might be introduced with some knockabout people. But that would be hardly respectful, and might put you to personal inconvenience. Afraid, if you wouldn't suit us you would have even less chance with the Empire or the Alhambra.

Post-mark, Transvaal.—Yes, it is all very well for you with your treasure-chest to talk about patriotism, but when are you going to pay us what you owe us? You are a nice President!



"NO FOLLOWERS ALLOWED."

THE SURVIVAL OF THE UNFITTEST.

(See advertisement in any paper.)

I MEET him every morning, with unflinching regularity,
 His smug detested features with my morning paper come,
 His hopelessly plebeian nose—the essence of vulgarity—
 His fatuously smiling mouth which happily is dumb.

I sit at breakfast hating him, and straightway comes a litany,
 Of commination rising to my lips in wildest flood;
 The toast is turned to leather; rancid grows the finest
 Brittany;
 The bacon's gutta-percha, and the fragrant coffee mud.

At evening—at that mystic hour when good digestion banishes,
 All cares, all doubts, all trouble, from one's unperturbed
 brain,
 I take my evening paper, and, behold! all comfort vanishes,
 For with his irritating smile my *bête noir's* there again.

I gaze upon his portrait with a paralysed repulsion, and
 I read the horried symptoms of his pulmonary woe,
 And how his precious life was saved by So-and-So's emulsion,
 and
 Anathemas I heap upon the head of So-and-So.

O So-and-So! I mutter. What mistaken ingenuity,
 To manufacture drugs to keep such specimens alive!
 This weed was never meant to grow—a sorry superfluity,
 Whom all the laws of Nature had forbidden to survive.

"DEAR, dear," said a stout old lady, as she waddled along
 to catch the train, "what a true saying it is—more waist, less
 speed."

ALL ALIVE O!

HERE'S an advertisement from the *New York Herald*,
 November 27th.

WANTED.—A LIVE MAN, an American
 preferred, for permanent position.

Not much life in him if he is to be fixed up in a "permanent
 position" (of course, an upright man is what is wanted) for any
 length of time. He'll become a standing joke to his friends
 and acquaintances. Wouldn't a "dead-head" do as well?
 That depends upon what is expected of this live American in a
 permanent position. Perhaps "American" is preferred because
 accustomed to "fixins?"

"WALKER LONDON," as Mr. TOOLE used to say in *The House-
 boat*. The name of WALKER, apart from its having long been
 used as an expression of incredulity, though now seldom heard
 in this connection, used to be inevitably associated with a
 useful dictionary, but now-a-days, especially at the approach
 of Christmastide, WALKER spells "Diary." Diaries of various
 sizes to suit various pockets, as well as to size as to expense,
 some specially ornamental, all useful. The only fault that,
 without being captious, one can find with the majority of these
 diaries issuing from The Walkeries of Warwick Lane is that
 the space allowed for making notes each day is too circum-
 scribed. What will be entered on all these pages, now blank,
 by the end of the first year in the Twentieth Century? As
 the page, not in the Diary but in the Opera, sings, "*Qui vivra
 terra.*"

(IL)LEGAL MAXIM FOR THE LONDON EGG MARKET.—"Once a
 new-laid egg, always a new-laid egg."



Mrs. Smith. "THIS IS A VERY UNPLEASANT PIECE, DON'T YOU THINK? THERE'S CERTAINLY A GREAT DEAL TO BE DONE YET IN THE WAY OF ELEVATING THE STAGE."

Mr. Jones (who hasn't been able to get a glimpse of the Stage all the afternoon). "WELL—ER—IT WOULD COME TO MUCH THE SAME THING IF YOU LADIES WERE TO LOWER YOUR HATS!"

HINTS ON MAKING ONESELF THOROUGHLY OBJECTIONABLE.

III.—AT THE THEATRE.

THE plan of action to be followed by you will, necessarily, have to be adapted to the character of the entertainment. If it is a popular musical piece, you will, of course, loudly hum every melody that you know, beating time to it with one or both feet. In the case of a play with a strong dramatic interest, you should get your friend to assume, for the nonce, a very low standard of intelligence, which will prevent him from understanding the meaning of anything that is passing on the stage. He should ask you frequent questions about the motives of each character, and you will explain everything, with a wealth of detail. Something of this sort should be the result.

"Who is that last person who came on? Why, don't you see, she's the mother of the man on the box ottoman. No, he's not supposed to know it really. In the next act there's a scene, and it all comes out. What are they doing? He's trying

to get that young fellow, who's a cousin by marriage, to sign a paper. Why? Ah! that's part of the scheme the company promoter worked out in the first act. Don't you remember?" &c., &c.

Another plan, which may be tried when you are witnessing the performance of some really clever and brilliantly written piece, is to laugh persistently at the wrong places and to allow every smart line in the dialogue to pass unnoticed. Unfortunately, except on first nights, your behaviour will be identical with that of the greater part of the audience.

The above are a few of the more artistic methods of going to work; there are, however, others of a less subtle nature, which may suggest themselves to the student. Among these may be included the placing of your feet on the seat in front of you and gently wiping them on the occupant; the audible sucking of voice lozenges; and, lastly, a tendency, if you are some distance from the gangway, to leave your place after every act, and return when the curtain has risen on the next one.

The *matinée* hat is such an ancient and much discussed cause of annoyance, that I will not venture to touch upon it here.

P. G.

? J. L. WANKLYN ?

Don't tax a man with ignorance—the imputation rankles—

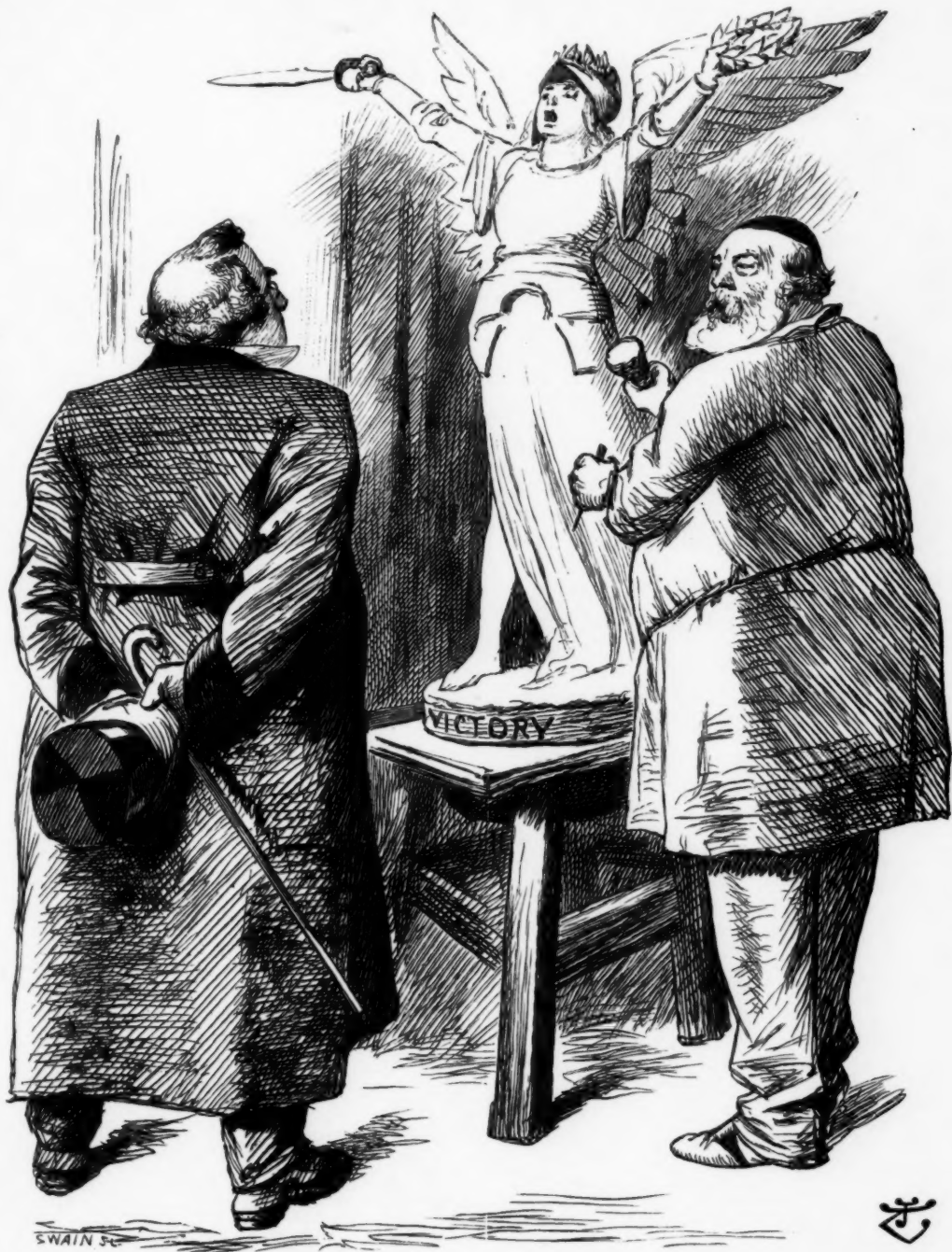
Because he asks who WANKLYN is and why on earth he wankles.*

From Mr. Punch's Dictionary.

* WANKLE. *Transitive verb*: to patronize in a pushing and conceited manner; to wish to be noticed by someone, e.g. "I wankled Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, who thanked me for my advice and protection." "We tried to wankle the Prince of WALES, but he simply wouldn't look at us."

Intransitive: to write pompous, unmeaning platitudes, e.g. "Nobody ever wankled as much as this windy fellow, who writes you a letter a mile long, with no more of meaning in it than there is of Sarsaparilla in a duck's egg."

To be fond of seeing one's name in the newspapers, e.g. "He was all his life one who wankled, and journals that placed his name in print were nor wanting."



MONEY NO OBJECT.

SCULPTOR S-L-SB-RY (at work on a statue of Victory). "I'M AFRAID, MR. BULL, I MUST TROUBLE YOU FOR SOMETHING ON ACCOUNT—THERE'S A LOT MORE WORK IN IT THAN I EXPECTED."



Jocular Chimney Sweep (to astounded Porter). "I SAY, PORTAH, PUT MY GOLF CLUBS IN THE GUARD'S VAN!"

SOLDIERS THREE.

THE Regular, the Militiaman, and the C. I. V. distinguished themselves equally. Perhaps the Regular was rather more at the immediate front than the other two, but the three equally distinguished themselves. Then, when the war was apparently about one half, or possibly three-quarters or even seven-eighths over, the C. I. V. was ordered home. Next came the Regular. The Militiaman stayed behind, not because he was much better than his two colleagues, but because he was accustomed to be treated as the Cinderella, or perhaps Cinderella's brother, of the service. So, when the Regular and the C. I. V. began to compare notes after their return home, the Militiaman was not in it.

"Well, comrade," said the Regular, "here's luck. We have both seen a pretty deal of fighting."
 "There you are right," returned the C. I. V.; "but, I must say, the bulk of the fighting was done by you."
 "Not at all," said the Regular. "We shared the campaign together."
 "But I will tell you where we *did* have the pull of you," continued the C. I. V. "When *you* came back there was scarcely a crowd to speak of to see you."
 "Well, there were not very many," admitted the Regular. "We got on easily enough."
 "Quite so," exclaimed the C. I. V. in triumph. "But when we came home, there were such thousands and thousands of people to greet us, that we had to fight every inch of the way."

IN PRAISE OF A FASHIONABLE VIRTUE.

"It is not mine"—to use a phrase
 Not quite my own (with me a rarity)—
 To sing, as one who wears the bays,
 High themes like Faith and Hope and
 Charity:

To poach on Laureate fields of rhyme—
 Not thus, my ALFRED, would I hurt you!
 Has not the SHAKSPEARE of our time
 First claim to sing each higher virtue?

Yet may the lesser virtues win
 A verse from some poor lesser poet,
 And fools have licence to chip in
 Where modern SHAKSPEARES scorn to
 "go it."

I, therefore, raise a feeble strain,
 And sing as one who has a passion
 To cultivate with might and main
 A virtue which is "all the fashion."

'Tis one to exercise all day,
 All night (or thereabouts) to dream on,
 By such a course, I'm glad to say,
 I daily overthrow the Demon! *

If, friends, I've roused to some small
 pitch

Your curiosity—the fact is
 That "Patience is a virtue," which
 I recommend you all to practise!

* "The Demon" is one of the most popular and difficult games of Patience.

PAGE FROM A FINANCIAL ROMANCE.

LOCKSHY entered the Usurers Company's office (Registered) and begged for a loan.
 "Certainly," replied the official in answer to the application.

"And, of course, you know the law?"
 "Perfectly," was the response, with a suggestion of a Venetian accent. "You must not charge more than a reasonable percentage, and you must be careful to avoid fraud."

"Well, how much do you want?"
 "Why not a thousand pounds?"
 "With pleasure; and we would propose to charge 3 per cent."

"Is not that perilously high?" suggested LOCKSHY. "But, there, if there is a subsequent quarrel the judge will put things to rights."

The money was handed over and the borrower signed the receipt.

"SHYLOCK!" exclaimed the official. "Why, surely you called yourself LOCKSHY?"

"Merely the force of habit," exclaimed the borrower.

"And what will you do with the money?"
 LOCKSHY smiled. Then he answered.

"I shall lend it out at interest abroad—at sixty per cent!"

And then both came to the conclusion there was no place like home—for money-lending.

TO LORD KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM.

["A Mr. WILLIAMS has been offering respectful apologies to Satan, for mentioning him in the same breath as Lord KITCHENER."—*Daily Mail*.]

MY lord, throughout your promising career,
 Full of events, both novel and exciting;
 To casual observers it's been clear
 That you have some ability for fighting.
 Since first your youthful talents you applied,
 You've risen up by regular gradations;
 Which, I imagine, must have satisfied
 The most exacting of your fond relations.
 You are the proud possessor of a brain
 (In your profession few can boast one wiser);
 While the result of the Soudan campaign
 Proved you the pattern of an organiser.
 A man of iron, as your friends confess,
 Your schemes are sound, your actions never slurred are;
 You filled with indisputable success,
 The hard position of Egyptian Sirdar.
 Who that was present will forget the fuss
 When, fresh from scenes a trifle grim and gory, a
 "Special" conveyed you to the terminus,
 And you were nearly mobbed outside Victoria.
 "No nonsense," is your motto, it would seem,
 Even throughout this false and insincere age;
 And since in war you showed yourself supreme,
 In peace you had the offer of a Peerage.
 But, stay! Although you've reached a giddy height,
 Pray do not let these mere successes blind you;
 Your claim to popularity is slight,
 As Mr. WILLIAMS wishes to remind you.
 He—in some passing madness, shall we say
 (Perhaps a *lapsus lingua* would be more fair)?—
 While he was arguing, the other day,
 About your handling of guerilla warfare,
 Knowing that you were one of those, no doubt,
 Accustomed quite to moving in *excelsis*;
 He, I repeat once more, while on the spout,
 Coupled your lordly name with someone else's.
 But, when the words were spoken, came remorse,
 Soon he retracted his appreciation;
 Fearing lest you should be puffed up, of course,
 And get ideas too far above your station.
 So, though with Boer slimness, it is true,
 You have presumed to play "the very devil";
 You must not think that gentleman and you
 Are both upon the same distinguished level.

P. G.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE *Cornhill* is always among the brightest of the magazines, dealing with an unfailling variety of interesting matter. Just now, its value is enhanced by the contributions of the head of the far-famed publishing house, SMITH, ELDER. Last month, Mr. GEORGE SMITH indulged the public with some reminiscences of the start of his firm in what was at the time the bye-path of book publishing. In the current issue he recalls the history of his dealings with CHARLOTTE BRONTË, resulting in dowering the world with *Jane Eyre*. The first offering from the remote Howorth parsonage was *The Professor*, which reached *Cornhill* bearing the scored-out addresses of three or four other publishers. It was not accepted; but, as CHARLOTTE BRONTË has herself told, it was declined, "so courteously, so considerably, in a spirit so rational, with a discrimination so

enlightened, that refusal cheered the author better than a vulgarly expressed acceptance would have done." The result of the correspondence was the production of *Jane Eyre*, which took the world by storm. Mr. SMITH adds many interesting particulars to common knowledge of this striking and attractive personality. These chapters of autobiography, of which my Baronite hopes there may be many, are written with a charm of style and a delicate reticence that suggest Mr. SMITH has, through half a century, mistaken his vocation. He has been publishing books instead of writing them.

Mr. CRANE has cleverly, in many respects, illustrated *Don Quixote*, as "retold by Judge PARRY" (BLACKIE & SON), but except where the colouring is sallow rarely has he given us the living presentment of the *Knight of La Mancha*. A florid *Don* won't do, a yellow-jaundiced *Don* isn't the man at all; a *Don* with anything like joviality expressed on his countenance is not the true *Quixote*. It is so adapted by Judge PARRY as to be intelligible as, perhaps, interesting to youthful readers; but this is a very big "perhaps," as to the majority the *Don* is as one who "has left but the name."

It is pleasant to learn, being creditable to the taste of the British public, that *Penelope's Experiences in Scotland*, published in 1808, is in its ninth edition. Messrs. GAY AND BIRD celebrate the event by issuing it profusely illustrated with charming sketches by CHARLES E. BROCK. These are, in respect of originality of design, humour and drawing, far above the average of book illustrations. Mr. BROCK also illustrates, in the same delightful fashion, a companion volume, being *Penelope's English Experiences*. If anything could add to the value of KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN'S work (it's no business of my Baronite's, but he always wants to spare himself the *Wiggin*—KATE DOUGLAS is enough for him) it is the collaboration of Mr. BROCK.

There is great personal charm, says my Nautical Retainer, in *The Puppet Show* of MARIAN BOWER (CONSTABLE). It treats, in the main issue, of the theme of hereditary madness, the sacrifice entailed by an apprehension of this taint, and the apparently arbitrary conduct which comes of a resolve to hold the secret fast. If the hero is himself a little nebulous, there are characters, more than one, drawn with admirable observation; in particular, that of the man-hunting military adventuress. The author's types are varied and always nicely distinguished without recourse to the obviously abnormal. She handles her matter with a woman's fine intuition for delicacy of motive; but, at need, she has a man's strength in reserve. The book holds the fancy; and the conclusion, satisfactory in itself, still leaves us with speculation at play. THE BARON DE B.-W.

THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER.

WHETHER in producing *The Wisdom of the Wise*, by "JOHN OLIVER HOBBS," a comedy in three acts, Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER has proved himself one of those children of Wisdom of whom the Mother is justified, is a problem that the duration of the "run" alone can solve. So, though in one sense it is a "problem play," yet is it after all but a simple comedy of character, not of action: and whatever interest there may be in the plot is aroused more by what the people say than by what they do. Probably it is a work that would read far better than it acts; probably, too, it might have been more effective in action had the excisionary power been in less lenient hands, and, at the same time, had the stage management been more stage-business-like. The first act, quiet as that of an ordinary French comedy, is pleasantly interesting; the second, the best written of the three, promises well throughout, has two telling situations in the vein of true comedy, and finishes amid plaudits. For the third act—well, as in the old "ARNOLD'S Latin Exercises" it was "*actum est de exercitu*," so here is it with the play. "The essence of wit is surprise"; here the only surprise is that so sparkling a writer should have given

us so flat a finish. JOHN OLIVER's witty countryman, Mr. PHELPS, said, "Who never makes a mistake never makes anything," which epigram will encourage the author, and, if necessary, console the manager.

Miss M. TALBOT as *Mrs. Lupton Miles*, one of the Duchess's aunts, is very good, and Mr. VINCENT, as *Bradgers*, M.P., is capital in one of the best comedy scenes of the piece, sharing its honours with Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER and Mr. H. B. IRVING, who, by the way, except in the last act when the cynic he represents may be supposed to be in real earnest, is throughout excellent. It is difficult to decide what sort of character Miss JULIA OP is intended to portray. To the ingenuousness of Miss FAY DAVIS (she is the young Duchess) frequenters of the St. James's have become accustomed. Perhaps in the next piece, whatever it may be, Miss FAY will be allowed to "cut the *Juliets* and to come to the *Beatrices*." Miss GRANVILLE as the mischief-maker is so good that it is to be wished she had to make more mischief than is allotted to her by the *Wisdom of the Wise*. What is the *raison d'être* of the title? Where "the wisdom"? Who are "the wise"? Neither were in evidence on the first night, when, like Ajax defying the lightning, Mr. ALEXANDER flouted the unmannerly Boobers. Better leave these Boobers to take their "booze" outside. As you, Mr. Manager, silently smile up at them, you may adapt the lines of Lady WINCHILSEA to Pope, and remember that:

"Disarmed with so genteel an air,
The contest they'll give o'er!
So, ALEXANDER, have a care,
And shock the Gods no more!"

Good luck be with you, Mr. Manager and Actor, with your playhouse, and with JOHN OLIVER's play.

DOPING DECLINED.

I dope	We backed it
Thou triest doping	Ye laid against it
It was injected.	They got left.

DECEMBER.

(A Fragment.)

DECEMBER once again! and, oh, how soon the Century will have seen its final moon! Swiftly succeeding in an endless chase, the Nineteenth goes, the Twentieth takes its place. I might go on for ever striking attitudes, tickling the groundlings with such hoary platitudes, but being merciful I stop with this much: December's not a month that I should miss much. It is a month that brings, with much beside, the joys and noise and toys of Christmastide; its bills, its bells, its usual decorations, its waits, and all its other perturbations; but worse than bills and bells, than toys and noise, worse than its waits, it brings us home our boys. Behold them swarming from their various schools, released from books, from benches, and from rules. Bursting with health and mischievous as gnomes, they take by storm their fond ancestral homes, harry their sisters, whose long locks they knot up, and play all pranks that boyhood ever got up, until at length, the mirrors being shattered and all the furniture defaced and battered, the cook a ruin mid her broken crockery, the butler turned to nothing but a mockery—until at length a plethora of eating, more efficacious than the soundest beating, drives them in peaceful biliousness to bed, and rids awhile the household of its dread.

Now in the clubs the careful waiters show a new-born spirit, darting to and fro. Mostly as active as their dress can make them, and so impassive that no joke can shake them, see how, with more than usual agility, they now display a wonderful civility. From the New Year and on through dull November they do their willing duty by a member, bring him his daily meat, and beer, and cheese, and execute his orders at their ease. But now they smile, they buzz about his seat, rush for his beer and scurry for his meat, divine his words before he has



"WHAT ARE YOU READING, DORIE?"
"PAPA'S POEMS."
"BEEN NAUGHTY?"

addressed them, and know his wants before he has expressed them, nor fail to grieve (since waiters are but men) if, when he goes with dull, neglectful pen he leaves unmarked list—placed in full view it is—that shows the total of the Club's gratuities.

A VEGETARIAN CRUSADE.

The reign of vegetables is at hand; but we need a crusade to bring it in. Let noble verse be set to noble music for that end. In the following lines we glorify rice. That rice is superior to flesh meat is easily proved. Who would throw mutton chops at a newly-married couple? No, we all acknowledge that innocent rice is superior to mutton chops.

RICE.

Majestoso.

A Mighty Theme is mine—'tis Rice.
How nice
Is rice!

How gentle and how very free from vice
Are those whose nourishment is mainly rice.
Far to the land of ayah and of syce,
Where peaceful peasants earn their humble pice,
There would I fly if I might have my "chice,"
And revel in the luxury of rice.

Allegretto.

Rice, rice,
Succulent rice!
Really it doesn't want thinking of twice.
The gambler would quickly abandon his dice,
The criminal classes be quiet as mice,
If carefully fed upon nothing but rice;

Yes, rice!
Beautiful rice,
What the heathen Chinese would call "velly fine lice."
All the wrong in the world would be right in a trice
If everyone fed upon nothing but rice.
Rice!



CHAPTER I.

ON the Eastern border of Herne Bay, standing some way back from the sea, there is—or was at the period of this story—a small red-brick detached house, with the name St. Andrew's painted on the gate. Here Miss BIRD, formerly a governess, but preferring to reign over three sets of furnished apartments rather than to serve in splendour and be snubbed by the butler, did very well for herself. She never took in families where there were babies; she kept two servants in the winter, and added a boy for boots and knives during the season; she objected to vulgarity, and she charged high. Her lodgers saw her but once a day, in the morning, when she appeared, rather well modelled on a lady housekeeper that she had known in her last situation, received the programme for the day, and never said "Sir" or "Ma'am." The rest of the day she worked in dim, remote regions; there she looked a little like a cook, and—which was more important—cooked like one. The house was plainly and very comfortably furnished, and free from the vice of over-decoration so common in the worse sea-side lodging-houses and the better London drawing-rooms. Not in one of the sitting-rooms did "The Soul's Awakening," or "An English Merry-making in the Olden Time," exercise its familiar influence; not in one of the bed-rooms did a minatory text shout at you from above the wash-stand. It was a decent house, where the silver and the glass were bright, and the linen was good and clean. It had an excellent bath-room, and no seaw-view at all.

As a rule, in the winter Miss BIRD came up to the surface and breathed. She would live a life of cultured leisure, occupying the ground-floor set herself, reading the best of the novels from TUPPER'S Library, occasionally strolling on "the front," if the weather permitted. She loved to sit in the chief seats at any entertainment that might be given at the Town Hall. She even had a few discreet friendships, though she drew the line, very properly, at anyone who kept lodgings. But she never touched the cottage piano in her drawing-room set; in

her governess days she had taught the piano. When spring came, and brought visitors with it, like a black satin mermaid who had seen enough of the upper world she sank gracefully into the basement again.

This year, for reasons which will shortly appear, Miss BIRD subsided early in February. At ten in the morning a young man in blue serge stood in the ground-floor sitting-room, with his back to the fire, watching the tall and severe maid remove the breakfast things while he rolled his cigarette. The critics said he had a beautiful soul; he also had a misfit face, good in parts, and dark hair, and his name was JULIUS POYNT. At the moment, he seemed a little out of temper.

"I heard the footstep above of course," he was saying, "but I never dreamed that the drawing-room floor could be let. I supposed the rooms were being cleaned, or aired, or something of that kind. At Herne Bay, in February, I did think I could have the place to myself. What else did I come for? Is it an old lady?"

"No, Sir. Very young; she has her maid with her."

"Sings of course."

"Sometimes, Sir."

"Well, there's no help for it. The set at the top is not comfortable, but I must change. I must ask Miss BIRD—"

The austere maid nearly smiled. "I fear, Sir," she said, "that the other set is also let—has been let since Christmas. Miss BIRD has never known such a thing in her experience before."

"Another lady?"

"No, Sir; a gentleman has them, a Mr. HERWOOD."

"Well," said JULIUS POYNT in despair, "I must speak to Miss BIRD about it."

Miss BIRD, usually a woman of resource, could only say she was sorry. If Mr. POYNT had told her, when he wired to engage the rooms, that he did not want them if the rest of the house was occupied she would have informed him. It was very unusual for any visitors to be at Herne Bay at that time of the year. Probably all the other lodgings in the place were vacant, if Mr. POYNT would like— But Mr. POYNT did not like; he supposed he must make the best of it. He only hoped he would see nothing of the other lodgers.

He acquiesced so readily, from an appreciation of the hopelessness of trying to make his desire for complete withdrawal

from his kind in any way intelligible to an ex-governess mind, which is for the ordinary purposes of life the most commonplace mind in the world after that of a minor poet. Besides, he had some regard for his own comfort, and if he left Miss BIRD he knew that he might search long before he found a landlady to suit him so well.

On the afternoon before, on his arrival, he had made a survey of Herne Bay and had found it just what he wanted. He had gone out towards the Reculvers, along the cliffs. A succession of heavy rains, snow, hard frost, thaw, and frost again, had made the scene almost romantic in its desolation. Down the brown crumbling cliffs were frozen cascades, rigid and greenish-yellow. Amid the bushes at the base were ice-bound pools; and yet never had one boy with one brick come to profane the solitude and test the skating prospects. The whole scene vividly recalled the Swiss Alps to one who, like JULIUS POYNT, had never been there. Behind him a deserted bungalow complained from many frantic notice-boards to deaf and bitter winds. JULIUS turned and walked back along the sea-front, and still he found everywhere the same note. The white bathing-machines huddled together as if for warmth. Here the shutterless restaurant of Signor CHIANTINO made no secret that it was closed until the season. JULIUS put up his single eye-glass (every JULIUS wears a single eye-glass), and looked through into the interior. There were the glass jars for sweetmeats, empty now; in the middle of the shop, where once the festive holiday-maker took his lemon-water ice, the ebonized, cane-seated chairs were piled together symmetrically. CHIANTINO had gone to the sunny south; he would return with the swallows maybe; in a restaurant-keeper that would not be inappropriate. One or two of the better hotels made a brave show of spread tables near the ground-floor windows, but no one sat there. The mitre-folded napkins and ruby wine-glasses seemed almost pathetic to JULIUS in their useless declaration of what it was impossible to believe; it was like some poor devil shamming a competence to avoid charity. A sportsman on the beach, lonely and local, was missing the sea-birds, and then sending an annoyed and perplexed retriever into the water to fetch them out. The new pier was open, and there was no one on it. Further west, the old and ruined pier was being slowly eaten by the icy sea, under a grey snow-laden sky.

The whole scene had been just what JULIUS POYNT wanted; he had congratulated himself on having chosen this place for his escape. This atmosphere of death-in-life was peculiarly suited to his needs. He was flying from something that has been the ruin of many even of the greatest, something of which he was afraid. He wished to cut himself off from the sight and hearing of all old friends, or even acquaintances, for a while; he was afraid to talk to any of them. He had been placed in a position where he no longer trusted himself; he was going through an ordeal that for many men that he knew had proved too hard. The atmosphere of Herne Bay helped him. You will understand that, as soon as you know what the ordeal was. And if he did fail in some small respect, there would be no witnesses of it. People in Herne Bay either did not read that part of their daily paper, or would consider the name a coincidence. POYNT was not an outrageously uncommon name, and he had suppressed the JULIUS; Miss BIRD only had the initial.

And now there were people staying in the house who might be thrown in his way. He could dodge the girl all right, but there was nothing to stop that fool of a man from thinking it a friendly act to scrape acquaintance with him. POYNT could almost imagine him saying that it seemed absurd that they should both sit in solitude every night, seeing that they lived in the same house. Then, sooner or later, would come the question: "I wonder, by the way, if you are related to the JULIUS POYNT who—" It would be hateful.

Many persons of a nervous temperament find, when annoyed, a great difficulty in keeping still in one place. POYNT had a nervous temperament. He put on his hat and went out. Once

more he walked towards the Reculvers, but this time he went along the beach. The tide was far out. I wish now that I had not said that, because you may expect that tide to come in and cut him off; and it did not do that.

It was necessary for him to get control over his own thoughts. There was one subject that haunted him; and that subject he was not to think about. Laboriously he turned his mind to some work that he had planned for the future, meditating and recasting. At that moment a Tam o' Shanter hit him in the face.

CHAPTER II.

Looking upward, he saw on the edge of the cliff a young lady without a hat. The Tam o' Shanter had a feather in it; there was a strong wind blowing. He made deductions, and the young girl proved them to be correct by calling to him.

"I'm so sorry. That's mine; the wind blew it off. Would you mind keeping it a moment while I climb down?"

"Don't come down," he called. "I'll bring it up to you."

The cliff was low, and presented no difficulties. In a minute he was standing by her side, and wishing that he dared put up his eye-glass in order to see her better. She did not seem to be more than twenty; she had an air of vitality and great self-confidence; she was pretty, and the cold wind had obliged her with a most charming colour.

"Thank you so much. I am sorry to have given you the trouble. And—indeed, that is not the only apology I owe you."

"It was no trouble at all. I'm afraid I don't understand the second apology."

"Only that I'm sorry that my rooms are over yours, Mr. POYNT, since that annoys you so much. But it's not all my fault; I came first."

"How on earth—" he began.

She smiled wistfully. "It's quite simple. You talked to ANNA, Miss BIRD's servant; ANNA talked to my maid, WATERS; WATERS talked to me. And— But I need not say that now."

"I'm distressed that what I said was repeated to you. Give me at least a chance to explain. May I walk a few steps with you? It is too cold for standing still. All that I said reflected not on you, but me. I do not wish to bore you with more of my private affairs than I can help, but at present I am—well—distrusting my own weakness in the circumstances in which I am placed. Frankly, I wanted to hide myself until I felt I had recovered my nerve and my sense of proportion. Other men have gone through what I am going through, and made no fuss at all. I despise my weakness, but at least I recognise it. I don't know if you understand."

"Not in the least. It would be less interesting if I did. But of course you were bound to be interesting."

"You don't know who I am?" he asked with sudden terror.

"No; I only know your name, and that you have come to Herne Bay in the depth of winter. It is for the latter reason that I know you must be interesting—if not in yourself, by virtue of your circumstances. It could not possibly happen otherwise; it is impossible to come here in the winter, when the town is dead and the sea is cold, for a commonplace reason."

"Then you—" He paused.

"Certainly; it was no commonplace reason that brought and keeps me here. Nor is it so with Mr. HERWOOD, the man whose rooms you wanted so as not to hear me singing overhead. But I must not keep you; you want to go and hide."

"I shall not believe you understand and forgive, Miss—ah, I don't know your name."

"You may read it; it's not pretty enough to say." She gave him her card. It bore the name Miss JANE SMITH. He put up his eye-glass to read the card, and did not drop it again. Yes, she was most abominably beautiful, and he felt more than ever anxious to be forgiven.

"I shall not believe you understand," he resumed, and she interrupted him.

"But I don't understand, and have said so. It does not

matter, because you may explain, perhaps, later. At least Mr. HEREWOOD did, and I don't suppose that your motives for secrecy can be as strong as his. You may come a little further, if that's what you were going to ask. Shall I tell you about Mr. HEREWOOD?"

"Do, please," said JULIUS, who so far had taken no interest in the second-floor man, and now was beginning to dislike him.

"He is very tall, and has a very broad chest, and looks like a Viking. You ought to see him; but we shan't this morning, because I have shut him up in his rooms."

"Shut him up?"

"Yes, that's what it comes to. I left my little terrier Vixen asleep on the mat outside my door, and he dare not come past her. Much less dare he ring and ask to have her moved for him. So we shan't see him. The reason which brings him here is magnificent, and I wish I could tell you it. Can you keep a secret?"

"Certainly."

"Are you a man with many prejudices?"

"Singularly few."

"Then I will tell you. Mr. HEREWOOD's a criminal—steeped in crime. You can have no conception of the things he's done. If the police knew he was here, they would be down on him in a moment; and he says it would be a lifer. Isn't it nice?"

"Nice? It's perfectly appalling! Really, Miss SMITH, ought you to—"

"Oh, it's all right. He's not here on business now. He's resting. Besides, he's a very educated man; he says that they have to be in his profession now-a-days. His conversation is perfectly enthralling; he has so many stories to tell of dark deeds in which he has been the leader. He likes burglary best, and says that the revolver is the burglar's best friend. But he can make counterfeit coin as well."

"I'll remember that," said POYNT, "in case he looks in and asks me to oblige him with change."

"You would be quite safe," said Miss SMITH. "When he's resting he never does anything professional. The other day we went into Canterbury by omnibus, and he pointed out to me a big old house, where he knows there is any amount of silver plate. He said it was only a one-man job, and that he could clear it all out any night; but that he did not dream of touching it while he was resting."

"It's queer," said JULIUS, "that a desperado like that should be nervous with dogs."

"With cows too; he gets over a gate until they are past, when he meets them in the road. Oh, yes! And he wouldn't climb up the cliff, as you did; I had to go down to him. I thought—"

She broke off abruptly, walked a little quicker, and looked annoyed with herself. At the same time, there was a flicker of checked humour in her eye. There was a moment's silence, and then JULIUS asked drily:

"And when was it that Mr. HEREWOOD wouldn't climb the cliff?"

"Never mind. Well, it was the other time that my Tam o' Shanter blew off."

"Oh!"

Again a short silence, and then Miss SMITH spoke with some impetuosity. "I know what you think, of course. You think two things, one right and one wrong. You are right in believing that I took the only way to make his acquaintance and yours intentionally. But you are wrong as to my motive. I can only tell you—and it is perfectly true—that I should have been just as eager to make the acquaintance if you had both been women. I wish you had, for then I should not have had to throw myself open to a misconception that would never have occurred to the mind of a woman if she had been a man. It is not for nothing that one takes lodgings in Herne Bay in February; it means romance somewhere. I have been wearied with commonplace all my days, but when I tell you that I thirst for romance,

I do not want you to think that I am hunting a vulgar flirtation like a shop-girl on her Sunday out. I loathe any conventional unconventionality."

JULIUS POYNT assured her that he had not thought any of the things that, as a matter of fact, he had thought. He could hardly have done less.

"I may add," she said, "that I was glad to gather from your rather enigmatic explanations, that you are here seeking refuge from some affair of the heart, and that, therefore, you will be as little disposed as I am to—stupidity. I like to talk to people who are even a little out of the groove; that's the whole explanation. As for your story, I don't want to be curious. Whether you tell it to me or not will depend entirely—" She broke off suddenly.

"Entirely on myself," said JULIUS, finishing the sentence for her.

"Not at all. It will entirely depend on me. I thought I ought to warn you of that. Thanks for saving my Tam o' Shanter; I am not rich, and could not have afforded to lose it. Good-bye."

She turned away, and went skimming down the slope of the cliff. JULIUS wondered whether he, or she, or HEREWOOD, or all of them, were mad. He was particularly perplexed by her astonishing and needless allusion to her poverty in her last sentence. And he did not believe in the poverty either.

CHAPTER III.

On the following morning, after breakfast, Miss BIRD entered the sitting-room occupied by Miss JANE SMITH, and discussed the question of luncheon and dinner with her, Miss BIRD providing the knowledge and Miss SMITH the enthusiasm. When that was arranged, Miss SMITH said:

"I should be glad if you would sit down for a moment, Miss BIRD. I want to ask your advice."

Miss BIRD seemed surprised, and sat down.

"I want to ask you," Miss SMITH continued, "if there would be any impropriety in my asking Mr. HEREWOOD and Mr. POYNT to take tea with me here this afternoon."

Miss BIRD did not hesitate. "To my mind there would be the appearance of it. You perhaps think me too strict?"

"Not in the least. I only ask you, since I believe you to be a lady of great tact. If you will, help me to devise some means by which I can have this little tea-party without that appearance. There must be conditions which, if they were strictly observed, would put things all right."

If you wish to please a man, let him believe that you think him unusually courageous; if you wish to please a woman, say that she has tact; if you want to flatter a schoolmaster, tell him he is very sarcastic, which will probably be untrue.

It pleased Miss BIRD to be accused of tact. She at once took an interest in the projected festivity. After thought, she produced the following conditions:

1. That the tea shall begin at five and conclude at six precisely.

2. That at no time shall Miss SMITH be in the room alone with either of the two gentlemen, WATERS being instructed so to regulate her presence in the sitting-room as to avoid this.

3. That no round games of any kind shall be played. (Miss BIRD was particularly strong on this condition, and apparently had reminiscences; she seemed rather surprised that no opposition was offered.)

4. That Miss BIRD's maid, ANNA, shall be instructed to enter the room three times during the hour without knocking, and at irregular intervals; and that, to prevent the appearance of espionage, she shall, on the first occasion, ask if anything more is required, and on the second make up the fire, and on the third bring in a letter.

Under those conditions Miss BIRD held that the tea could be given with her entire approval, and without the least risk of compromise.

(Continued in our next.)